

# Aquinas on the Metaphysician's vs. the Logician's Categories

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Following Aristotle, Thomas Aquinas identifies supreme genera which he considers to be the fundamental categories both of predication and of being. Thus, like Aristotle before him, Thomas holds that these categories are studied both by the logician and by the metaphysician.<sup>1</sup> In contrast to Aristotle, however, Thomas is clear that the metaphysician studies the same ten categories identified by the logician, although from the perspective of his distinct science.<sup>2</sup> In this article, I will examine Aquinas's views on some of the similarities and differences in these two treatments of the categories, the logical and the metaphysical. To this end, my article will consist of three parts. In the first, I will consider his account of the respective subject matters of metaphysics and logic, focusing on the implications for the treatment of the categories in these two sciences. In the second part, I will examine how

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<sup>1</sup> The question of whether Aristotle's *Categories* is a logical or metaphysical work is a debated one (Thomas himself considered it to be logical; see, e.g., Aquinas, *In Metaphysicam* VII.13.1576). With that said, Aristotle does treat of the ten categories identified in *Cat.* 4.1 again in *Topics* 1.9, a clearly logical work.

Although Thomas prefers to refer to the Aristotelian categories as the "predicaments" (*praedicamenta*), I will instead refer to them as "categories" since that is the term more commonly employed today. (All translations from the Latin are my own.) Unlike many of his scholastic predecessors and successors, Thomas never wrote a commentary on Aristotle's *Categories*. Regarding the medieval commentary tradition on this work, see Lloyd A. Newton, ed., *Medieval Commentaries on Aristotle's Categories* (Boston: Brill, 2008). See, among the many valuable contributions within this volume, Newton, "The Importance of Medieval Commentaries on Aristotle's *Categories*," 1–8; Bruno Tremblay, "Albertus Magnus on the Subject of Aristotle's *Categories*," 73–98; Robert Andrews, "Interconnected Literal Commentaries on the *Categories*," 99–118; and Giorgio Pini, "Reading Aristotle's *Categories* as an Introduction to Logic: Later Medieval Discussions about Its Place in the Aristotelian *Corpus*," 145–182. Regarding Scotus's consideration of the logical versus metaphysical status of the categories set forth by Aristotle, see Giorgio Pini, *Categories and Logic in Duns Scotus: An Interpretation of Aristotle's Categories in the Late Thirteenth Century*, Studien und Texte zur Geistesgeschichte des Mittelalters 77 (Boston: Brill, 2002).

<sup>2</sup> Aristotle presents a shorter list of eight categories in *Metaphysics* 5.7.1017a7–b9 than that at *Cat.* 4.1.1b26–27, leaving out position and state.

it is that, in Thomas's view, the metaphysician and logician come to embrace the same list of categories—a topic that concerns their derivation, or deduction. Finally, in the third part I will examine how, given Thomas's doctrine of the analogicity of being, the metaphysician and logician have a different understanding of the character of the categories.

## I. Aquinas on the Subject Matter of Metaphysics and Logic

To begin to grasp the distinction for Thomas between the logical and the metaphysical accounts of the categories, we first need to consider his frequent observation that the ten categories divide being (*ens*).<sup>3</sup> As a general rule, he makes this observation in the context of distinguishing between two senses of being: on one hand, as divided by the categories; on the other, as the truth of a proposition. Thomas tells us that according to the former sense, being signifies the essence of a thing existing outside of the mind.<sup>4</sup> Taken in this way, 'being' refers to what he also terms *ens naturae*—literally 'being of nature,' but commonly translated as 'real being.'<sup>5</sup> To be clear, however, what is translated here as 'real being' does not refer simply to actual being—being that *in fact* exists outside of the mind. For Thomas, real being includes *possible*

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<sup>3</sup> Thomas will speak of *ens* as divided into (*in*) or by (*per*) the categories. There appears to be no distinction in meaning in his use of these different prepositions. For instances where he employs the preposition *in*, see, e.g., Aquinas, *Super Sententiis* I.22.1.1, ad. 2; *In Physicam* III.5.322; *In Metaphysicam* V.9.885; *ibid.* VII.1.1246. For instances where he employs the preposition *per*, see, e.g., *Super Sententiis* I.19.5.1, ad. 1; *ibid.* II.34.1.1 co.; *ibid.* IV.1.1.4B, ad. 1; *De ente et essentia* 1 (henceforth, *De ente*); *Summa contra Gentiles* III.8.13 (henceforth, SCG); *Summa theologiae* I.5.6, ad. 1 (henceforth, ST); *ibid.* I.48.2, ad. 2; *In Metaphysicam* V.9.889; *ibid.* VII.1.1245; *ibid.* IX.1.1769; *De malo* 7.1, ad. 1. Thomas also at times refers to *ens* as divided "according to" (*secundum*) the categories. See, e.g., *In Metaphysicam* V.12.930; *ibid.*, IX.11.1895.

Because *esse* is the principle by which *ens* is *ens*, Thomas also at times speaks of *esse* as divided by the categories. See, e.g., *Super Sententiis* III.6.2.2 co.; *Quodlibet* IX.2.2 co.

<sup>4</sup> Aquinas, *Super Sententiis* II.37.1.2, ad. 3 (Mandonnet, 2:947): "Uno modo quod significat essentiam rei extra animam existentis...." Cf. ST I.48.2, ad. 2 (Leonina, 4:492): "Uno modo, secundum quod significat entitatem rei, prout dividitur per decem praedicamenta...." All quotations for *Super Sententiis* are taken from Aquinas, *Scriptum super Sententiis magistri Petri Lombardi*, ed. P. Mandonnet, 2 vols. (Paris: Lethielleux, 1929); quotations for ST are taken from Aquinas, *Summa theologiae*, in *S. Thomae Aquinatis opera omnia*, ed. P.M. Leonina XIII, vols. 4–12 (Rome, 1884–1906).

<sup>5</sup> Although later scholastics will employ the term *ens reale*, Thomas himself never does. Nevertheless, the notion is clearly present in his thought in phrasings such as *ens naturae*, *ens in rerum natura*, and *ens extra animam*.

being as well: being that potentially exists outside of the mind. As he is careful to note, each of the categories is in turn divided by act and potency.<sup>6</sup> It is real being, the sort divided by the categories, with which the metaphysician is concerned, for “this science considers *ens commune* as its proper subject, which is divided by substance and the nine genera of accidents”—that is, the ten categories of *Categories* 4.1.<sup>7</sup>

Thomas explains that the second sense of being, taken as the truth of a proposition, stems from the use of the verb ‘to be’ (*esse*) as a copula in Latin (as in English today), the function of which is to join together subject and predicate—what is sometimes referred to as the “is” of predication. Such compositions occur in the mind which, he tells us, can form affirmative propositions of things that do not and cannot exist in reality. Thus, even negations and privations can be called beings, such as when we say that ‘Blindness is in the eye.’<sup>8</sup> Or, again, as when we say that ‘Nonbeing is nonbeing.’ In contrast to real being, this second sort of being, as the truth of a proposition, exists within the mind; for that reason, Thomas refers to it as *ens rationis*, which literally means “being of reason,” but is sometimes translated as ‘logical being.’

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<sup>6</sup> Regarding the division of the categories of real being by act and potency, see *In Metaphysicam* IV.9.897; *ibid.*, X.3.1981–82. It should be noted that for Thomas, possible real being is not limited merely to the sort of possibility found in the passive potency of matter, but also in the active potency of an agent—most notably the divine power. Regarding possible being as real potential being, see John F. Wippel, “The Reality of Nonexisting Possibles According to Thomas Aquinas, Henry of Ghent, and Godfrey of Fontaines,” *The Review of Metaphysics* 34 (1981): 738–39. In this article, Wippel responds to Norris Clarke’s view that possible being should be classified as purely intentional or mind-dependent being. Nevertheless, in that piece Clarke does acknowledge that a more traditional interpretation of Thomas is to classify possible being as a type of real being. See Clarke, “What is Really Real?” in *Progress in Philosophy: Philosophical Studies in Honor of Rev. Doctor Charles A. Hart*, ed. J.A. McWilliams (Milwaukee: Bruce Publishing Company, 1955), 64–90.

<sup>7</sup> Aquinas, *In Metaphysicam* VIII.1.1682 (Cathara and Spiazzi, 402): “...*haec scientia [metaphysica] consideret ens commune sicut proprium subiectum, quod quidem dividitur per substantiam et novem genera accidentium...*” All quotations for *In Metaphysicam* are taken from Aquinas, *In Metaphysicam*, ed. M.R. Cathara and R.M. Spiazzi (Turin: Marietti, 1950).

<sup>8</sup> Aquinas, *De ente*, c. 1 (Leonina, 43:369, lines 5–11): “*Horum autem differentia est quia secundo modo potest dici ens omne illud de quo affirmativa propositio formari potest, etiam si illud in re nihil ponat; per quem modum privationes et negationes entia dicuntur; dicimus enim quod affirmatio est opposita negationi, et quod caecitas est in oculo.*” All quotations for *De ente* are taken from Aquinas, *De ente et essentia*, in *S. Thomae Aquinatis opera omnia*, ed. P.M. Leonina XIII, vol. 43 (Rome, 1976).

<sup>9</sup> Aquinas, *In Metaphysicam* IV.1.539. In this respect, Thomas considers the analogous character of being to extend even to nonbeing, albeit in the weakest sense.

The temptation to employ this latter translation, arises, perhaps, from Thomas's identification of the proper subject matter of logic as *ens rationis*.<sup>10</sup> Still, 'logical being' is an unfortunate translation of *ens rationis*, in part because it could leave the false impression that since, in Thomas's view, "*ens rationis* is divided against *ens* as divided by the ten categories,"<sup>11</sup> metaphysics studies the categories, whereas logic does not. This would indeed be a startling conclusion given his position that in acquiring knowledge one should begin by studying logic, and the first work one would encounter in the *logica antiquorum* would be Aristotle's *Categories*—a treatise that Thomas expressly identifies as a work of logic!<sup>12</sup> Indeed, he considers that work to be foundational in the study of logic, the science that considers the operations of the intellect.

According to Thomas, Aristotle's *Categories* considers what belongs to the first of these operations, which Thomas refers to as the "understanding of indivisibles" (*indivisibilia intelligentia*)—those things conceived by a simple understanding (*simplici intellectu concipiuntur*).<sup>13</sup> He tells us that this understanding concerns knowing *what* something is—an operation that would later come to be termed 'simple apprehension.' Thomas observes that in logic, such understanding of indivisibles must be studied first because it provides the elements for the other operations of the intellect: judging and syllogistic reasoning.<sup>14</sup> And these "indivisibles," most generally taken, are the supreme genera, or categories.

If, as Thomas says, "*ens rationis* is divided against *ens* as divided by the ten categories,"<sup>15</sup> how then can the logician, whose domain is *ens rationis*, study the categories? Here we need to consider that Thomas in fact identifies three kinds of *ens rationis*. One sort are the privations and negations that we have already considered. Such beings do not have real existence outside of the mind because they *cannot* have such existence, for in their very notion they

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<sup>10</sup> Aquinas, *In Metaphysicam* IV.4.574, p. 160: "...*ens rationis, est proprie subiectum logicae*." Regarding Thomas's views on the subject matter of metaphysics, see Robert W. Schmidt, *The Domain of Logic According to Saint Thomas Aquinas* (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1966), esp. 1–89.

<sup>11</sup> *De potentia* 7.9 co., (Pession, 63): "*Nam ens rationis dividitur contra ens divisum per decem praedicamenta ut patet V Metaph.*" All quotations for *De potentia* are taken from Aquinas, *De potentia*, ed. P.M. Pession, in *S. Thomae Aquinatis Quaestiones disputatae*, vol. 2 (Turin-Rome: Marietti, 1953).

<sup>12</sup> Regarding Thomas's views on the pedagogical order of the sciences, see, e.g., *In De Trinitate* 5.1, ad. 3; *ibid.*, 6.1, ad. 3. Regarding his view of the *Categories* as a logical work, see, e.g., *In Metaphysicam* VII.13.1576.

<sup>13</sup> Aquinas, *In De Interpretatione*, proemium, 2; see also *In De Trinitate* 5.3 co.

<sup>14</sup> Aquinas, *In De Interpretatione* I.2.5.

<sup>15</sup> See note 11 above.



include nonbeing. Thus, there can be no essence of them, and neither can they belong to the categories. The second sort of *ens rationis* Thomas identifies are what we might term 'fictive beings.' The examples Thomas gives are dreams and fancies of the imagination like the goatstag. Although the notions of these things do not include nonbeing, they nevertheless have no essence; hence, they are not real beings and, again, cannot be categorized. The third sort of *ens rationis* he identifies are intentions formed by the intellect, such as genera and species.<sup>16</sup>

Although Thomas does consider such intentions to be beings of reason, he acknowledges a limitation in the way in which they correspond with reality. For as he explains, when we consider real beings, what is in the intellect can correspond to them either in an immediate or in a mediated way. There is an immediate correspondence when the intellect conceives the form of something existing outside of the mind, such as a man or a stone. But following upon such an act of understanding, the intellect is also able to consider the thing by reflecting (literally, bending back *reflexus*) upon itself. For example, by reflecting upon itself the intellect understands a genus such as *animal* in *man*, in *horse*, and in many other species. And to the intention by which the intellect understands a genus, there is no immediate correspondence between the genus and any external thing that is in a genus, but there is a mediated correspondence—for while such intentions have no immediate foundation in real being, they do have a remote foundation.<sup>17</sup> Hence, he concludes that our intellect is not false in considering a genus or species; for in doing so, it does not understand them as existing outside the mind, but rather it understands them *as understood*.<sup>18</sup> By contrast, our conceptions of fictive beings such as chimeras and goat-stags have no foundation in reality, whether immediate or remote, and so Thomas concludes that such conceptions are false in that respect.<sup>19</sup>

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<sup>16</sup> See e.g., Aquinas, *Super Sententiis* I.19.5.1 co. On the use of the term *intentio* in Aquinas's writings, see André Hayen, *L'Intentionnel dans la philosophie de Saint Thomas* (Paris: Desclée de Brouwer, 1942), 183–97.

<sup>17</sup> Aquinas, *De potentia* 1.1, ad. 10; on remote foundation, see *Super Sententiis* I.2.1.3 co. These sorts of intentions would be called by later scholastics *second intentions*. Whereas first intentions refer to extra mental realities, second intentions refer back to first intentions. Thomas himself, however, seldom uses this terminology. See Hayen, *L'Intentionnel dans la philosophie de Saint Thomas*, 183–97. On second intentions in Aquinas's writings, see Schmidt, *Domain of Logic*, 122–29; Pini, *Categories and Logic in Duns Scotus*, 45–67.

<sup>18</sup> Aquinas, *De potentia* 7.6 co. Still, we should add that the logician is not aware of this foundation. It remains for the metaphysician to discern what is real being and what is not because only the metaphysician considers real being *as real being*.

<sup>19</sup> Aquinas, *Super Sententiis* I.2.1.3 co.

Now, since Thomas tells us that “the logician considers the mode of predicating, and not the existence of a thing,”<sup>20</sup> it might seem that Thomas views the proper subject of logic to extend to all that the “is” of predication extends—viz., these three sorts of *ens rationis*. But here we would be mistaken, for a closer look at his writings reveals that in fact it is only the third sense that he has in mind. In his *Commentary on the Metaphysics*, we find him identifying what logic studies in the following terms:

Being (*ens*) is taken in two respects, namely, being of reason (*ens rationis*) and real being (*ens naturae*). Now, being of reason is properly said of those intentions that reason discovers (*adinvenit*) in the things it considers, such as the intention of *genus*, *species*, and the like, which are not found in reality (*in rerum natura*), but follow upon a consideration of reason. And this sort of thing, namely being of reason, is the proper subject of logic.<sup>21</sup>

In short, the being of reason that logic studies is the sort referred to by Robert W. Schmidt as “positive rationate being”—in contrast to the other two types which, lacking any foundation in reality, are nonbeings.<sup>22</sup> Indeed, according to Thomas, it does not belong to logic to consider privations and negations, but rather to metaphysics—not because they are a kind of real being, but because the study of opposites belongs to the same science. Thus just as medicine, which studies health also studies illness, so metaphysics, which studies being, studies nonbeing.<sup>23</sup> And as regards fictional being, there can be no science at all.<sup>24</sup>

We see then that, even though the logician studies beings of reason, the beings of reason he studies have some (remote) foundation in reality—in

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<sup>20</sup> Aquinas, *In Metaphysicam* VII.17.1658, p. 396: “*Logicus enim considerat modum praedicandi, et non existentiam rei.*”

<sup>21</sup> Aquinas, *In Metaphysicam* IV.4.574, p. 160: “...*ens est duplex: ens scilicet rationis et ens naturae. Ens autem rationis dicitur proprie de illis intentionibus, quas ratio adinvenit in rebus consideratis; sicut intentio generis, speciei et similium, quae quidem non inveniuntur in rerum natura, sed considerationem rationis consequuntur. Et huiusmodi, scilicet ens rationis, est proprie subiectum logicae.*”

<sup>22</sup> Schmidt, *Domain of Logic*, 81–89.

<sup>23</sup> Aquinas, *In Metaphysicam* IV.3.564–66. Schmidt, *Domain of Logic*, 81–82. As Schmidt notes, however, particular privations are studied in the particular sciences (ibid.).

<sup>24</sup> On this point, see Schmidt, *Domain of Logic*, 83: “And how can there be any science of such fictions when science is supposed to be knowledge made certain by demonstration from true premises? Knowledge of what is in the mind cannot be made certain if there is no reality with which to compare it; ...viewed objectively they cannot be made the subject of a science; it would rather be a game whose rules each player makes up as he goes along.”

real being. It is for this reason that Thomas considers there to be a close affinity between logic and metaphysics. As he explains, the intentions that the logician considers are equal in extension to real being, for all of real being falls under the consideration of reason. Hence, the subject of logic extends to everything that can be predicated of real being and is equal in scope to the subject of metaphysics.<sup>25</sup> Hence, we are told, the logician grasps the categories of being and distinguishes between them.<sup>26</sup> But whereas the metaphysician recognizes the categories as the fundamental modes of being (*esse*), the logician treats them simply as logical intentions that are the supreme genera.<sup>27</sup>

For some of Thomas's scholastic successors, this distinction between the intentional and the real results in a difference between the logician's list of categories and the metaphysician's. For, it will be argued, the metaphysician recognizes that the logician's ten supreme genera is in reality reducible

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<sup>25</sup> Aquinas, *In Metaphysicam* IV.4.574.

<sup>26</sup> Aquinas, *Super Sententiis* I.22.1.1, ad. 3.

<sup>27</sup> Although the categories as treated by the logician are properly first intentions, the logician still considers them only in their intentionality and, thus (as I read Thomas) they are treated by the logician as beings of reason. Indeed, as Schmidt notes, "Any reflex knowledge might be called a second intention in a way, since it is had after the direct knowledge and as a consequence of it" (Schmidt, *Domain of Logic*, 124). Thus, even first intentions such as the categories when considered by the logician as intentions can be seen, in a way, as having only a remote foundation in reality: for although substances, qualities, and quantities truly exist outside the mind, the genera *substance*, *quantity*, and *quality* do not. Again, it is the genus *qua* genus that the logician considers, not genus in relation to real being.

But to what division of logic does it belong to consider the categories? Although Thomas never explicitly tells us, I believe his answer would be dialectics. Consider his distinction between pure logic (*logica docens*) and applied logic (*logica utens*): the former is concerned with second intentions such as *genus* and *species*, not with first intentions such as *substance*, *quantity*, and *quality*. Regarding applied logic, Thomas distinguishes between demonstrative logic (*logica indicativa*) and applied dialectics (*dialectica*). Although the former is demonstrative in itself, in application it does not remain formally logic but rather becomes the science in which it is employed. By contrast dialectics, while not demonstrative, remains formally logic in application. Thus, the logician who considers intentions as applied (i.e., first intentions) would have to be, for Thomas, the dialectician. But, again, the dialectician considers these intentions as intentions, in relation to intentions and not in relation to real being.

Regarding Thomas's account of the dialectician's consideration of intentions, see Aquinas, *In Metaphysicam* IV.4.574; *ibid.* XI.3.2204; *Expositio Posteriorum Analyticorum* I.20.5. Regarding his divisions of logic, see Schmidt, *Domain of Logic*, 31–48. For a reading of Aristotle's *Categories* as a dialectical work, see Stephen Menn, "Metaphysics, Dialectic and the *Categories*," *Revue de Métaphysique et de Morale* 100 (1995): 311–37.

to a shorter list of ontological categories.<sup>28</sup> Thomas himself, however, is clear that he views the ten supreme logical genera listed in Aristotle's *Categories* to coincide with the fundamental modes of being studied in metaphysics.<sup>29</sup> If his view is correct, a question arises: how do both the logician and metaphysician come to possess the same list of categories? This question concerns the topic of the derivation of the categories, so with that in mind I shall turn to the second part of my paper.

## II. The Derivation of the Categories

Nowhere, to my knowledge, does Thomas explicitly address how it is that both the logician and the metaphysician come to possess the same list of categories. We are, however, presented with some possible interpretations of Thomas's position on the matter. One interpretation is that the two sciences independently discover the categories—logic discovering them through predication and metaphysics through a consideration of the modes of being—and that the two lists happen to coincide. Given the method and order of the sciences, however, this interpretation seems problematic. As Thomas explains, "logic provides the instruments for speculative thought—namely syllogisms, definitions, and so forth—which we need in the speculative sciences."<sup>30</sup> Thus, in a certain way, metaphysics presupposes logic, namely as its instrument.

In q. 6, a. 1 of his *Commentary on Boethius's De Trinitate*, Thomas clarifies the unique relationship between metaphysics and logic. Considering the different ways in which the sciences may be said to proceed according to a rational method, Thomas explains that one way is on the part of the principles from which the science proceeds, namely when some science proceeds to prove something from logical intentions such as genus, species, the opposite, and so forth. A science is said to proceed in a rational manner when it

<sup>28</sup> On this topic, see Giorgio Pini, "Reading Aristotle's *Categories*," 160–70.

<sup>29</sup> See, e.g., Aquinas, *In Metaphysicam* V.9.889–97.

<sup>30</sup> Aquinas, *In De Trinitate* 5.1, ad. 2 (Leonina, 50:139, lines 193–207): "*Scientiae speculativae, ut patet in principio Metaphysicae, sunt de illis quorum cognitio quaeritur propter se ipsa. Res autem de quibus est logica non quaeruntur ad cognoscendum propter se ipsas, sed ut adminiculum quoddam ad alias scientias; et ideo logica non continetur sub speculativa philosophia quasi principalis pars, sed sicut quiddam reductum ad philosophiam speculativam, prout ministrat speculationi sua instrumenta, scilicet syllogismos, et definitiones, et alia huiusmodi quibus in scientiis speculativis indigemus. Unde secundum Boethium in Commento super Porphyrium, non tam est scientia quam scientiae instrumentum.*" All quotations for *In De Trinitate* are from Aquinas, *Super libros Boethii De Trinitate et De hebdomadibus*, in *S. Thomae Aquinatis opera omnia*, ed. P.M. Leonina XIII, vol. 50 (Rome, 1992).

applies logic as present in its teaching function (*logica docens*). What Thomas has in mind here is a logical methodology which, he notes, does not belong properly to any of the particular sciences since they must use their own principles when demonstrating (i.e., rather than proving something merely from logical intentions), otherwise the science would fall into error. With that said, he notes that this logical methodology *is* properly suited to metaphysics because metaphysics, like logic, is a universal science; for as we have seen, in a sense both sciences have the same subject matter.<sup>31</sup> Given what Thomas says here, we can conclude that if the metaphysician employs the definitions and propositions of the logician, he must have an awareness of what the logician holds.<sup>32</sup> And this awareness would need to extend to an awareness of the logician's list of categories. In short, it seems unlikely that by a mere coincidence both the logician and metaphysician share the same list.

With the foregoing in mind, a second interpretation regarding the agreement in the two lists of categories would look to the pedagogical order of discovery. As already noted, Thomas holds that following the pedagogical order of the sciences, the first discipline one should study is logic. Regarding metaphysics, he holds that it should be studied last since it is concerned with the highest causes.<sup>33</sup> Thus, one might conclude that in his view the list of ten categories is first identified by the logician and then given to the other sciences, including metaphysics. Following this interpretation, the metaphysician would then merely verify this list of logical intentions as modes of real being.

As tempting as this interpretation is, I would suggest that it in fact inverts the order of Thomas's thought. Here, I propose a third interpretation to account for the agreement between the logician's and metaphysician's list of categories. Rather than logic giving the list to metaphysics, I would argue that it is the other way around: it is metaphysics that gives the categories to logic, accounting for the agreement between the two lists. In advancing this interpretation, I am not speaking of the pedagogical order of discovery—I

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<sup>31</sup> Aquinas, *In De Trinitate* 6.1 co., p. 159, lines 119–36: “*Dicendum ad primam quaestionem quod processus aliquis quo proceditur in scientiis dicitur rationalis tripliciter. Uno modo ex parte principiorum ex quibus proceditur, ut cum aliquis procedit ad aliquid probandum ex operibus rationis, cuiusmodi sunt genus et species et oppositum, et huiusmodi intentiones quas logici considerant; et sic dicitur aliquis processus esse rationalis quando aliquis utitur in aliqua scientia propositionibus quae traduntur in logica, prout scilicet utimur logica prout est docens in aliis scientiis. Sed hic modus procedendi non potest proprie competere alicui particulari scientiae, in quibus peccatum accidit nisi ex propriis procedatur: contingit autem hoc proprie et convenienter fieri in logica et metaphysica, eo quod utraque scientia communis est et circa idem subiectum quodammodo.*”

<sup>32</sup> Which stands to reason, also, if we consider that metaphysics is the architectonic science that sets all other sciences in order. See Aquinas, *In Metaphysicam* I.2.50.

<sup>33</sup> Aquinas, *In De Trinitate* 3.1 co.; *ibid.*, 5.1, ad. 9.

do not mean to suggest that one must first study metaphysics before studying logic to encounter the categories. Rather, I am speaking of the order of the sciences and their relation to each other: an order that follows from the order of being. For the categories, as Thomas sees them, are modes of being in reality prior to their intentional existence in the mind.<sup>34</sup> What I am suggesting, therefore, is that the metaphysician gives the categories to the logician in the manner that a higher science provides the lower with its principles.<sup>35</sup>

As evidence of this interpretation, let us consider again Thomas's account of the proper subject matter of logic. As we have seen, both metaphysics and logic in a sense have the same subject. Both sciences study a universal subject that extends to all things: being (*ens*). There is, of course, the important distinction that metaphysics studies real being, whereas logic studies being of reason. But how do these sciences come to acquire these subjects?

Considering more generally the question of a science's subject matter, Thomas explains in his *Commentary on the Metaphysics* that for some sciences, the "whatness" of their subject is made known to them by the senses. As an example, he notes that the science of animals (zoology), receive the whatness of *animal* from something apparent to the senses. Thomas explains that through sensation, we are able to distinguish an animal from a non-animal. By contrast, he continues, some sciences receive the whatness of their subject matter by assuming it from another science. Going beyond a literal commentary of Aristotle's text, Thomas offers geometry as an example, which he tells us receives the whatness of magnitude (its subject matter), from metaphysics.<sup>36</sup>

Granting Thomas's basic distinction, we might ourselves ask, from where does metaphysics get *its* subject matter? There is no higher philosoph-

<sup>34</sup> See, e.g., Aquinas, *In Metaphysicam* V.9.889–97.

<sup>35</sup> Aquinas, *In De Trinitate* 5.1 co., p. 138, lines 165–68: "*Dicitur etiam philosophia prima, in quantum aliae omnes scientiae ab ea sua principia accipientes, eam consequuntur.*" Nor should we be concerned that because metaphysics employs logic as an instrument that this is a circular argument, since the principles that logic take from metaphysics are not the same as the instruments which the metaphysician takes from the logician to reach his conclusions. See *ibid.*, 5.1, ad. 9.

<sup>36</sup> In this text Thomas is going beyond a literal commentary. This account of the subject of geometry does not appear in Aristotle. Aquinas, *In Metaphysicam* VI.1.1149, p. 295–6: "*Ipsum autem quod quid est sui subiecti aliae scientiae faciunt esse manifestum per sensum; sicut scientia, quae est de animalibus, accipit quid est animal per id quod « apparet sensui »*, idest per sensum et motum, quibus animal a non animali discernitur. *Aliae vero scientiae accipiunt quod quid est sui subiecti, per suppositionem ab aliqua alia scientia, sicut geometria accipit quid est magnitudo a philosopho primo. Et sic ex ipso quod quid est noto per sensum vel per suppositionem, demonstrant scientiae proprias passiones, quae secundum se insunt generi subiecto, circa quod sunt. Nam definitio est medium in demonstratione propter quid.*"

ical science from which it can receive it. Rather, as with zoology, the subject matter of metaphysics is, in a way, evident to the senses, insofar as all that we sense is recognized as real being.<sup>37</sup> By contrast, the subject of logic, being of reason, cannot as such be received through sensation since it has only intentional being, existing in the immaterial intellect. Moreover, since logic as such is unaware of real being, it is incapable of distinguishing between being of reason and real being in the way that sense can distinguish animal from non-animal. Only metaphysics is suited to make this distinction. Hence, following Thomas's distinction, we must conclude that logic receives its very subject matter from metaphysics.<sup>38</sup> Indeed, only metaphysics would be capable of doing this since only a science whose scope is as universal as that of metaphysics could give logic its own universal subject.

Noting logic's dependence on metaphysics for its subject matter, Lawrence Dewan proceeds further to ask rhetorically, "Whose responsibility is it to define the genus, the species, and, we can add, the analogue?"<sup>39</sup> Not the logician, even though these intentions fall under his subject. It is, rather, the metaphysician. Commenting on Aristotle's *Metaphysics*, Thomas notes that it pertains to one science (metaphysics) to consider being as being and all that belongs to it, including such things as the prior and posterior, whole and part, and (what concerns us here) genus and species; for all of these, he tells us, are accidents of being *qua* being (*accidentia entis inquantum est ens*).<sup>40</sup> This observation appears to apply not simply to the *notion* of genus as a predicable, but to the supreme genera themselves that are also the supreme modes of being.

Consider again Thomas's example of the subject matter of geometry. He tells us that magnitude, or continuous quantity, is given to the geometer by the metaphysician. We are not told that the geometer receives his subject simply by abstraction. To be sure, Thomas does hold that we arrive at the notion of quantity by means of the first operation of the intellect,

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<sup>37</sup> This is not to deny the important intellectual role of *resolutio* in arriving at the concept of *ens commune*, nor is it to deny the important role of the negative judgment Thomas terms *separatio*, whereby we come to recognize its character as negatively or neutrally immaterial. Regarding the role of *resolutio* in metaphysics, see *In De Trinitate* 6.1 co. 3. Regarding the role of *separatio*, see *ibid.*, 5.3.

<sup>38</sup> On this point, see Lawrence Dewan, O.P., "St. Thomas and Analogy: The Logician and the Metaphysician," chap. 6 in *Form and Being: Studies in Thomistic Metaphysics* (Washington, D.C.: The Catholic University of America Press, 2006), 82–85.

<sup>39</sup> Dewan, "St. Thomas and Analogy," 83.

<sup>40</sup> Aquinas, *In Metaphysicam* IV.4.587, p. 162: "*Sed etiam considerat de priori et posteriori, genere et specie, toto et parte, et aliis huiusmodi, pari ratione, quia haec etiam sunt accidentia entis inquantum est ens.*"



through a process he terms the abstraction of form from matter.<sup>41</sup> But while we do come to have a knowledge of mathematical objects in this way, Thomas's position is that it belongs to the metaphysician to set our knowledge and the sciences in order and, in his example, give the whatness of continuous quantity to the geometer.

I find this example of particular interest because, together with discrete quantity, continuous quantity provides the first division of the supreme genus *quantity*. So, in Thomas's example we are but one step removed from one of the ten categories. What he says about continuous quantity would thus seem to hold no less true for the very category of *quantity*, namely that the metaphysician gives its whatness to the general mathematician, establishing the very subject of mathematics. And, thus, it would seem, that the metaphysician establishes the whatness of this category for all of the sciences, including logic.

Following this line of reasoning, I would argue that for Thomas, metaphysics establishes the whatness of all of the categories. And this is indeed the picture that we get when we consider his two accounts of the derivation of the categories—the first of which is offered in his *Commentary on the Physics* (1268–1269) and the second in the later *Commentary on the Metaphysics* (1270–1271).<sup>42</sup> Although there are some noteworthy differences between these two accounts, they agree in their fundamental methodology in deriving the categories; for both employ what Thomas terms the 'method of predication' (*modus praedicandi*)—a logical tool used in the service of metaphysics. Since the latter is Thomas's more mature presentation as well as the more metaphysical one, I will focus here on that.<sup>43</sup>

<sup>41</sup> Aquinas, *In De Trinitate* 5.3 co.

<sup>42</sup> See Aquinas, *In Physicam* III, lect. 5, nn. 321–24; *In Metaphysicam* V, lect. 9, nn. 889–897. Dating of Thomas's texts in this paper follows Jean-Pierre Torrell's *Saint Thomas Aquinas*, vol. 1, *The Person and His Works*, trans. Robert Royal, rev. ed. (Washington, D.C.: Catholic University of America Press, 2005).

<sup>43</sup> For a more detailed accounting of Thomas's derivation of the categories, see John F. Wippel, "Thomas Aquinas's Derivation of the Aristotelian Categories (Predicaments)," *Journal of the History of Philosophy* 25 (1987): 13–34; John F. Wippel, *The Metaphysical Thought of Thomas Aquinas* (Washington, D.C.: The Catholic University of America Press, 2000), 208–28; E.P. Bos and A.C. van der Helm, "The Division of Being over the Categories According to Albert the Great, Thomas Aquinas and John Duns Scotus," in *John Duns Scotus: Renewal of Philosophy* (Amsterdam: Rodopi, B.V., 1998), 187–89; Paul Symington, "Thomas Aquinas on Establishing the Identity of Aristotle's Categories," in *Medieval Commentaries on Aristotle's Categories*, ed. Lloyd Newton (Boston: Brill, 2008); Paul Symington, *On Determining What There Is: The Identity of Ontological Categories in Aquinas, Scotus and Lowe* (Piscataway, NJ: Ontos Verlag, 2010).

In book five, lectio nine, Thomas reminds us of his position that the division of being into the categories is a division of real being; the kind that lies outside the mind. Going beyond a literal commentary of the text at hand, Thomas explains that the sorts of things said in the proper sense “to be” are the sorts of things that signify the different figures of predication. Reminding us that being is not a genus, he notes that it cannot be divided by differences, but is instead divided according to diverse *modes* of predication. Lest we think this is merely a linguistic or grammatical account of the derivation of the categories, he is careful to note that these modes of predication themselves follow from diverse modes of existing (*modi essendi*), because in whatever way the term ‘being’ (*ens*) is predicated, in just as many ways “to be” (*esse*), is signified.

Following this method of predication, Thomas offers a detailed account of the derivation of the categories, beginning with a threefold division of modes of predication following from whether the predicate is taken (1) as what the subject is (from which he derives *substance* as a category), (2) or according to what is in the subject (from which he subsequently derives quantity, quality, and relation), or (3) from something outside the subject (from which he subsequently derives the remaining six categories). This is but the briefest sketch of Thomas’s account, but suffice it to say that in his view, every mode of predication must signify a mode of existing (*esse*).<sup>44</sup> And though he acknowledges that the method of predication is a logical methodology, he concludes that given the close affinity between logic and metaphysics, which we have already noted, it can be employed as an instrument in the service of metaphysics.<sup>45</sup>

What is noteworthy for our concerns is that as Thomas employs the method of predication, he presupposes real being to identify its fundamental modes. To be more precise, the method he employs presupposes our experience of real subjects with real accidents—accidents that can be predicated of the substance in which they are present. As Thomas explains later in book seven of the *Metaphysics* commentary, the sort of predication by which we are able to show that a substance is distinct from the essence of accidents is denominative predication. For we can say, ‘a man is white,’ but we cannot

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<sup>44</sup> Aquinas, *In Metaphysicam* V.9.889–97.

<sup>45</sup> Aquinas, *In Metaphysicam* IV.4.574; *ibid.*, VII.1.1253; *ibid.*, VII.3.1308. On Aquinas’s use of logic and the method of predication in metaphysics, see James C. Doig, “Aquinas on Metaphysical Method,” *Philosophical Studies* 13 (1964): 20–36; James C. Doig, *Aquinas on Metaphysics: An Historico-Doctrinal Study of the Commentary on the Metaphysics* (The Hague: Nijhoff, 1972), esp. 239–322; James B. Reichmann, S.J., “Logic and the Method of Metaphysics,” *The Thomist* 29 (1965): 341–95.

say, 'a man is whiteness.'<sup>46</sup> And the sort of subject that this methodology presupposes is not simply the grammatical/logical subject of a proposition, but a metaphysical subject: first substance, what Thomas terms a 'supposit,' or a concrete instance of substance. This is the metaphysician's understanding of 'subject,' unlike the logician's, for whom a universal can be a subject as well.<sup>47</sup>

By contrast, Thomas tells us that the consideration of substance and accident as it appears in the *Categories* is a logical one since it is phrased in terms of predication and predictability.<sup>48</sup> What is interesting to note is that even in this context there is the echo of the metaphysical. For the distinction drawn in that work between substance and accident also entails the notions of being *present in* or *not present in* the subject. Substance, Aristotle tells us, is never *present in*. But how can the logician be aware of this existential note? Certainly not with reference back to real being which he does not treat. Rather, this fundamental distinction between the categories must be provided to him by the metaphysician. And yet, the logician does not fully understand what he has been given.

This fact is brought out by Thomas in his commentary on book seven of the *Metaphysics*. There, he notes that Aristotle provides in this work a different account of substance than he had offered in the *Categories*. In the *Categories*, Aristotle identifies the essential characteristic (*ratio*) of substance as *that which is not in a subject*, and thus concludes that it is not contrary to the *ratio* of substance that it be predicated of a subject, for something can be predicated of a subject without being in it, as *animal* is predicated of *man*. Thus, Thomas explains, in the *Categories* Aristotle refers to universals, which are predicated of a subject, as "second substances." But in book seven of the *Metaphysics*, Aristotle now tells us that what he means by 'substance' is some-

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<sup>46</sup> Aquinas, *In Metaphysicam* VII.2.1288–89, p. 323: "*Ipsa ergo concretiva, sive denominativa praedicatio ostendit, quod sicut substantia est aliud per essentiam ab accidentibus, ita per essentiam aliud est materia a formis substantialibus. Quare sequitur quod illud quod est ultimum subiectum per se loquendo, « neque est quid », idest substantia, neque quantitas, neque aliquid aliud quod sit in aliquo genere entium.*"

<sup>47</sup> Aquinas, *In Metaphysicam* VII.2.1273–75; *ibid.* VII.13.1576.

<sup>48</sup> Aquinas, *In Metaphysicam* VII.13.1576, p. 379: "*Sed dicendum quod secundum logicam considerationem loquitur Philosophus in Praedicamentis. Logicus autem considerat res secundum quod sunt in ratione; et ideo considerat substantias prout secundum acceptionem intellectus subsunt intentioni universalitatis. Et ideo quantum ad praedicationem, quae est actus rationis, dicit quod praedicatur « de subiecto », idest de substantia subsistente extra animam. Sed philosophus primus considerat de rebus secundum quod sunt entia; et ideo apud eius considerationem non differt esse in subiecto et de subiecto. Hic enim accipit dici de subiecto, quod est in se aliqua res et inest alieni subiecto existenti in actu. Et hoc impossibile est esse substantiam. Sic enim haberet esse in subiecto. Quod est contra rationem substantiae: quod etiam in Praedicamentis est habitum.*"

thing that is *never* predicable of a subject; and so he concludes that universals cannot be substances.<sup>49</sup>

Thomas explains the difference between the two texts by noting that in the *Categories*, Aristotle is offering a logical account of substance, considering it as it is taken in the intellect according to the intention of universality; hence, the account of substance there is phrased in terms of predication. Thus, if we take substance in this logical way as a universal, then it can be predicated of a subject that exists outside of the mind. By contrast, the metaphysician considers things as real beings, “and therefore,” Thomas explains, “according to his consideration there is no difference between being *in a subject* and being [said of] a subject.” For the metaphysician takes the phrase ‘being said of a subject’ to refer to what is in itself something that exists in some subject—a subject that itself exists in act. And thus, this “thing” would have being in a subject.<sup>50</sup> Thomas’s point here is that, not only do accidents exist in a subject, but so do universals taken in the sense of the common nature, which outside of the mind exists only *in* individuals.<sup>51</sup> Thus, he concludes, from the perspective of the metaphysician, it is impossible for universals to be substances since substance cannot be *in* a subject—a position, Thomas notes, which is held even in the *Categories*.

We find in this text, then, that the metaphysician and logician differ in their understanding of substance and accident (and the distinction between the two) because of their different approaches to being: the metaphysician is concerned with real being, the logician with being of reason. We are presented with something of a metaphysical refinement of the logician’s understanding, but this is only according to the pedagogical order of discovery. It is not that the metaphysician gains his knowledge of substance and accident from the logician: their reality is evident to him. Rather, the metaphysician gives the notions of substance and accident to the logician. As Dewan notes when considering the aforementioned text, “The logician hears something of what the metaphysician says, but cannot be concerned with the whole of it.”<sup>52</sup> It is not that the logician speaks an entirely different language

<sup>49</sup> Ibid.

<sup>50</sup> Ibid. For the Latin, see n. 48.

<sup>51</sup> Here, it is important to consider the clarification that Thomas offers earlier in the same lectio between two senses of *universal*: “*Sciendum est autem, ad evidentiam huius capituli, quod universale dupliciter potest accipi. Uno modo pro ipsa natura, cui intellectus attribuit intentionem universalitatis: et sic universalis, ut genera et species, substantias rerum significant, ut praedicantur in quid. Animal enim significat substantiam eius, de quo praedicatur, et homo similiter. Alio modo potest accipi universale inquantum est universale, et secundum quod natura praedicta subest intentioni universalitatis: idest secundum quod consideratur animal vel homo, ut unum in multis*” (Aquinas, *In Metaphysicam* VII.13.1570, p. 378).

<sup>52</sup> Dewan, “St. Thomas and Analogy,” 85.

than the metaphysician (for both speak in terms of being)—rather the logician, as it were, speaks a different dialect: the dialect of dialectic. Thus, when he hears what the metaphysician says, he hears according to the “inflection” of predication and understands it in terms of *ens rationis*.

This difference between what the metaphysician “says” and what the logician “hears” arises in other contexts concerning their two considerations of the categories, most notably regarding that doctrine so central to Aquinas’s philosophy: the doctrine of analogy. With that in mind, I will now turn to the third part of my paper to consider the analogous relationship of the categories.

### III. Analogy and the Categories

According to Thomas, the analogicity of being is recognized by the metaphysician and the logician alike. We find this position alluded to in a much examined text on analogy from his *Commentary on the Sentences* (I, d. 19, q. 5, a. 2, ad 1) where he identifies three ways in which something is said to be analogical. Since different parts of this text have relevance for different parts of my own presentation, I will examine the extended text in some detail here.

According to the first way, Thomas tells us that something is analogical according to intention alone but not according to *esse*—that is to say, not according to reality. He notes that we find this sort of analogy when a single intention refers to many things by a relationship of priority and posteriority but which in reality is in only one of the referents. Thomas presents Aristotle’s classic example of *pros hen* equivocation here, noting that the intention “healthy” refers to the animal, urine, and diet in diverse ways according to priority and posteriority. This diversity, however, is not analogical according to reality because the *esse* of health is found only in the animal. And the implication is that whereas the logician would take such an intention to be analogical, the metaphysician recognizes that in reality it is not so. A further implication is that this sort of analogy does not pertain either to the metaphysician’s or the logician’s consideration of being (*ens*)—a reading that is borne out as we consider the two remaining ways of analogy identified by Thomas.<sup>53</sup>

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<sup>53</sup> Aquinas, *Super Sententiis* I.19.5.2, ad. 1, (Mandonnet, 1:492): “*Ad primum igitur dicendum, quod aliquid dicitur secundum analogiam tripliciter: vel secundum intentionem tantum, et non secundum esse; et hoc est quando una intentio refertur ad plura per prius et posterius, quae tamen non habet esse nisi in uno; sicut intentio sanitatis refertur ad animal, urinam et dietam diversimode, secundum prius et posterius; non tamen secundum diversum esse, quia esse sanitatis non est nisi in animali.*” This type of analogy will come to be termed ‘analogy of extrinsic attribution’ by Cajetan and later scholastics. In citing this passage, however, I do not

The second way is the inverse of the first: an analogy according to reality (*esse*) but not intention. We are told that this sort of analogy occurs when several things are treated as equal (*parificantur*) according to some common intention whereas in reality they do not have *esse* according to a single *ratio* in all of them. Giving an example from the cosmology of his times, Thomas notes that all bodies are treated as equal according to the intention of corporeity. And thus the logician, who considers only intentions, says that the name 'body' is predicated of all bodies univocally. But in reality, the *esse* of this nature in corruptible bodies is not according to the same *ratio* as it is in incorruptible ones (namely, celestial bodies). In contrast to the logician, Thomas tells us that the metaphysician and the natural philosopher *do* consider things according to their *esse*, and so they do not predicate the name 'body' univocally of both the corruptible and incorruptible. In other words, since both the metaphysician and the natural philosopher are concerned with reality, they recognize some things to be analogical that the logician does not. As we will later see, this second mode of analogy will have bearing on an important distinction between the metaphysician's and the logician's understanding of the categories (namely, the univocity of the categories for the logician and their analogicity for the metaphysician).<sup>54</sup>

For now, however, let us move on to the third type of analogy and its bearing for both the metaphysician's and the logician's understanding of the categories. Thomas tells us that according to the third way, something is analogical *both* according to intention *and* according to reality. And this sort of analogy occurs when things are not taken as equal either according to a common intention or in reality. And as an example he gives the way in which being (*ens*) is predicated of both substance and accidents.<sup>55</sup> If we compare Thomas's presentation of this type of analogy with the second, the clear

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intend to identify myself with the Cajetanian account of analogy. For a consideration of Cajetan's account of analogy, see Joshua P. Hochschild, *The Semantics of Analogy: Rereading Cajetan's De Nominum Analogia* (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 2010).

<sup>54</sup> Ibid.: "*Vel secundum esse et non secundum intentionem; et hoc contingit quando plura parificantur in intentione aliquid communis, sed illud commune non habet esse unius rationis in omnibus, sicut omnia corpora parificantur in intentione corporeitatis. Unde logicus, qui considerat intentiones tantum, dicit, hoc nomen corpus de omnibus corporibus univoce praedicari: sed esse huius naturae non est ejusdem rationis in corporibus corruptibilibus et incorruptibilibus. Unde quantum ad metaphysicum et naturalem, qui considerant res secundum suum esse, nec hoc nomen corpus, nec aliquid aliud dicitur univoce de corruptibilibus et incorruptibilibus, ut patet, X Met., text. 5, ex Philosopho et Commentatore.*"

<sup>55</sup> Ibid.: "*Vel secundum intentionem et secundum esse; et hoc est quando neque parificatur in intentione communi, neque in esse; sicut ens dicitur de substantia et accidente; et de talibus oportet quod natura communis habeat aliquod esse in unoquoque eorum de quibus dicitur, sed differens secundum rationem majoris vel minoris perfectionis.*" Thomas then concludes this reply to



implication is that regarding the third type of analogy, the logician and metaphysician are in agreement. And, as his example indicates, this is the case with their treatment of being and the categories.<sup>56</sup>

But the agreement extends, again, only as far as the logician is capable of hearing what the metaphysician has to say. Recall, again, that for the metaphysician, who is concerned with real being, the categories are recognized as ten fundamental modes of real being, or *modi essendi*—ten ways of existing. Thus, *ens naturae* is analogical because *esse* is analogical: there is priority and posteriority in the ways in which things exist in reality. And the most basic division is between substances, which exist *per se*, and accidents which exist *in alio*. How, we might ask, could the logician be aware of the analogicity of being if he is aware only of logical intentions and not real being? For, as Thomas presents the matter, the logician's ear does not hear the "is" of existence but only the "is" of predication.

The answer lies in the dependence of accidents upon substance not only in the order of being, but also in the order of essence. As Thomas explains, just as being (*ens*) is primarily and properly said of substances and only secondarily of accidents, so too essence is only properly and truly in substances, whereas in accidents it is found in a secondary way.<sup>57</sup> The reason is that accidents depend upon substance not only for their being but for their essences as well. As evidence, Thomas reminds us that an essence is signified by a definition; accidents thus have essence in the same way that they have definitions, and the way that they have definitions is with reference to substance. Thus, just as they are beings in a qualified sense (*secundum quid*), so too do they have essence in a qualified sense.<sup>58</sup> This fact is recognized by the metaphysician, who treats essence as a real principle within real beings; but it is also recognized by the logician, who is concerned with definitions. Hence, in his own way, the logician recognizes the analogicity of being, namely of *ens rationis*. And, as a result, he acknowledges in his way the analogous relationship among the categories.

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objection 1 by noting that names such as goodness are predicated analogically of God and creatures in this third respect.

<sup>56</sup> For a valuable treatment of this text, see Dewan, "St. Thomas and Analogy," 87–94. Dewan here takes issue (I believe quite rightly) with Ralph McInerny's reading of the same text in support of the thesis that for Thomas, the doctrine of analogy is entirely a logical doctrine and not a metaphysical one. For McInerny's reading of the text, see his *Aquinas and Analogy* (Washington, D.C.: The Catholic University of America, 1996), 6–14.

<sup>57</sup> Aquinas, *De ente* c. 1. Regarding the dependence of accident on substance in the order of essence, see Joseph Owens, *An Elementary Christian Metaphysics* (Houston: Center for Thomistic Studies, 1985), 155–7.

<sup>58</sup> Aquinas, *De ente* c. 6.



But while the logician hears this much of what the metaphysician has to say about being and the categories, again he does not hear the whole of it. For even though he recognizes the analogous relationship among the categories, he treats each of the categories itself as a genus that is purely univocal. By contrast, the metaphysician recognizes that, in reality, the categories are not entirely univocal. To clarify this point, let us return to our earlier text from the *Commentary on the Sentences* to consider again Thomas's account of the second way in which something is analogical.

There, he had told us that according to this way something is analogical according to reality but not intention. Recall his example of the genus *body*, which he says the logician treats as univocal in intention but the natural philosopher and metaphysician recognize as analogical in reality. To understand this example, we need to be familiar with Thomas's medieval cosmology in which the celestial bodies are incorruptible, unlike terrestrial ones.<sup>59</sup> Moreover, we need to be familiar with Aristotle's observation in book ten of the *Metaphysics* that the corruptible and incorruptible cannot belong to the same genus.<sup>60</sup>

Commenting on this passage, Thomas explains that corruptibility and incorruptibility are contraries since the former entails a potential to go out of existence whereas the latter entails the lack of such potential. As contraries, they differ from each other formally. This observation might lead us to conclude that the corruptible and incorruptible differ simply in terms of species. If that were the case, the two could indeed belong to the same genus; but as Thomas explains, matter and potency pertain to genus, whereas form and act pertain to species. Hence, whereas contraries that pertain to form and act result in a difference in species, those that pertain to potency result in a diversity in genera. It is for this reason that the corruptible and incorruptible cannot belong to the same genus. Moreover, Thomas adds, the corruptible and incorruptible divide being (*ens*) essentially (*per se*), for the corruptible has the potency for nonexistence whereas the incorruptible does not have this potency. Since being is not a genus, he notes that it should be of no surprise that the corruptible and incorruptible do not belong to the same genus.<sup>61</sup>

With all of this said, we must grant that there is something unfortunate about Thomas's example of celestial bodies, since we now know that the distinction he maintains is incorrect: those bodies are no more incorruptible than are terrestrial ones. Still, although his medieval cosmology has been relegated to the dustbin of history, that does not mean that his second mode of analogy should be tossed out along with it. For Thomas does not consider

<sup>59</sup> See, e.g., Aquinas, *In De Trinitate* 4.2 co.; *ibid.*, 6.3 co.; *De potentia* 7.7, ad. 1.

<sup>60</sup> Aristotle, *Metaphysics* X.10.1058b26–1059a15.

<sup>61</sup> Aquinas, *In Metaphysicam* X.12.2136–45. Cf. *ibid.*, V.22.1119–27; *In De Trinitate* 4.2 co.

the division of the corruptible and incorruptible to pertain simply to types of bodies but, as noted, to being as such—notably, in the distinction between material and immaterial beings, e.g., angels. As Thomas puts it in terms of his metaphysics of *esse*, material and immaterial beings have diverse modes of *esse* (*diversi modi essendi*), and so they cannot share a common genus whether proximate or even, he adds, remote—including the summum genus *substance*.<sup>62</sup>

To be more precise, however, he notes that the corruptible and incorruptible cannot belong to the same *natural* genus—namely, a genus as it is understood by the natural philosopher or metaphysician who consider intentions with reference to real being.<sup>63</sup> For he notes that “logically speaking” nothing prevents both sorts of beings from belonging to the same genus since they are able to share a single, common notion (*una communis ratio*) such as *substance*.<sup>64</sup> If we wonder why this is the case, he provides an answer for us in his commentary on Boethius’s *De Trinitate*. In q. 4, a. 2 Thomas tells us that the genus of a material substance is taken from its matter. Nevertheless, a genus does not signify simply the matter of the substance but the *whole* substance because the genus has in itself both matter and form. Therefore, when the natural philosopher (and the metaphysician) consider the genus of a material substance, they do so with respect to both parts of it. By contrast, when the logician considers a genus, he does so only with respect to what is formal in it and thus to its definition. Hence, Thomas explains, the logician’s definitions are called ‘formal definitions.’ In short, the logician prescinds from considering the material aspect of a genus and, consequently, prescinds from considering the genus’s potency or lack thereof. And, as a further consequence, neither does he consider its corruptibility or incorruptibility. Thomas concludes that because logic prescinds from such considerations, things that do not belong to a common natural genus (such as the corruptible and incorruptible) can nevertheless belong to a common logical one.<sup>65</sup>

Continuing on in the same article, he explains that the logician finding something common in terrestrial bodies, celestial bodies, and angels, places all of them in the single genus *substance*. Overlooking the hierarchical relationship of these beings, the logician offers a formal definition of *substance* as “that which is neither predicable of a subject nor present in a subject”—a

<sup>62</sup> Aquinas, *Super Sententiis* II.3.1.1, ad. 2; *In De Trinitate* 4.2 co.; *ibid.*, 6.3 co.; *Summa theologiae* I.88.2, ad. 4; *De spiritualibus creaturis* 2, ad. 16.

<sup>63</sup> On the natural genus and analogy, see Armand Maurer, “St. Thomas and the Analogy of Genus,” in *The New Scholasticism* 29 (1955): 127–44.

<sup>64</sup> Aquinas, *In Metaphysicam* X.12.2142.

<sup>65</sup> In all of this consideration, Thomas’s reference to the logician should be taken to refer to the logician in his role as dialectician. On the use of the term *logician* and variants thereof to refer to dialectics, the dialectical, and the dialectician, see Schmidt, *The Domain of Logic*, 37–41.

definition that is univocal.<sup>66</sup> But the metaphysician, who considers all of the principles of a thing, recognizes this hierarchy *as* a hierarchy since these beings have different grades of actuality.<sup>67</sup> Hence, he also recognizes that these beings belong to diverse natural genera.<sup>68</sup> With that said, he still recognizes that there is justification for calling all these beings *substance*; in other words, these diverse natural genera are not unrelated.

Considering the genus *substance* from a metaphysical perspective, Thomas offers a metaphysical definition focusing on the commonality of substance—not in terms of predication but in terms of *esse*. A substance is an *ens per se*: what exists in, or through, itself.<sup>69</sup> Or, when he wishes to be more precise, he notes that a better definition of substance would be “that which has a quiddity to which it belongs to exist *not* in another”—a definition that has the advantage of acknowledging his doctrine of the real distinction between essence and *esse* in finite beings.<sup>70</sup> Phrased in terms of *esse*, this (qua-

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<sup>66</sup> On the logical-dialectical character of this definition, see Aquinas, *In Metaphysicam* VII.13.1575–76.

<sup>67</sup> Aquinas, *In De Trinitate* 4.2.

<sup>68</sup> This is not to claim that all differences between genera are founded on degrees of actuality. Moreover, as Thomas notes elsewhere, this hierarchy is not only found between the material and the immaterial, but even among the immaterial as well. Considering the nature of angels, he explains that because they do not have matter to diversify their essences, each angel must differ from another according to its grade of being. Thus, Thomas famously argues that each angel is unique in its species (see, e.g., ST I.50.4). This conclusion may lead us to wonder whether he considers angels to be unique in their genera as well. He offers something of an answer to this question in his *Quaestiones disputatae de anima* (7, ad. 17), where he notes that as far as the metaphysician is concerned, genus and difference are not found *at all* in spiritual substances since such beings are pure forms (*formae tantum*) and simple species (*species simplices*).

<sup>69</sup> For references to *substance as ens per se*, see ST I.52.1 co.; *ibid.*, II-II.23.3, ad. 3; *De potentia* 5.10 co.; *De virtutibus* 2.1, ad. 22; *In Metaphysicam* IV.1.539. Still, Thomas acknowledges the problematic nature of such a definition since *ens*, properly speaking, is not a genus. Moreover, this definition has the disadvantage of implying that finite substances are beings of their very essence when, in fact, they are only beings by participation.

<sup>70</sup> Still, even this definition, he notes, is at best a *quai* definition. Aquinas, SCG I.25.9 (Leonina, 13:77): “*Oportet igitur quod ratio substantiae intelligatur hoc modo, quod substantia sit res cui conveniat esse non in subiecto; nomen autem rei a quidditate imponitur, sicut nomen entis ab esse; et sic in ratione substantiae intelligatur quod habeat quidditatem cui conveniat esse non in alio. Hoc autem Deo non convenit: nam non habet quidditatem nisi suum esse.*” Quotation for SCG is taken from Aquinas, *Summa contra Gentiles, lib. 1-2 cum commentariis Ferrariensis*, in *S. Thomae Aquinatis opera omnia*, ed. P.M. Leonina XIII, vol. 13 (Rome, 1918). Another advantage of this quasi definition is that it shows why God is not contained under the genus *substance*—whether taken as a logical or a natural genus.

si) definition implicitly acknowledges the real commonality of all substance as belonging to an analogical community rather than a univocal one. Thus, as I have discussed elsewhere, the diverse natural genera of substance are recognized to be united in what Thomas terms in one text a 'metaphysical genus'—a class that scholars would refer to as negatively or neutrally immaterial, and one, moreover, that is analogical in nature.<sup>71</sup>

Thus, for Thomas, the first of the categories is in reality an analogical class that admits of priority and posteriority, a fact recognized by the metaphysician. By contrast, the logician is unaware of this fundamental reality of the category *substance*, and so treats it as univocal.<sup>72</sup> And as with the category *substance*, I would argue that we find a similar situation with other categories: what the logician takes as univocal in formal definition the metaphysician recognizes as analogical in reality. Is this true of *all* the categories? I leave answering that question to future study, but the analysis seems to apply at least to several of them: categories in which both the corruptible and incorruptible could be found.<sup>73</sup>

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For Thomas's reference to this general formulation as a quasi-definition, see *Super Sententii* IV.12.1.1.1, ad. 2; for other versions of this general formulation, see *De potentia* 7.3, ad. 4; *Summa theologiae* III.77.1, ad. 2.

<sup>71</sup> See my "Substance as a Metaphysical Genus," in *The Science of Being as Being: Metaphysical Investigations*, ed. Gregory T. Doolan (Washington, DC: The Catholic University of America Press, 2012), 99–128. Regarding Thomas's use of the term 'metaphysical genus,' see Aquinas, *De spiritualibus creaturis* 1, ad. 10 (Leonina, 24/2:17–18, lines 574–81): "*Ad decimum dicendum quod forma generis de cuius ratione est materia non potest esse extra intellectum nisi <in> materia, ut forma plantae aut metalli; sed hoc genus 'substantiae' non est tale de cuius ratione sit materia, alioquin non esset metaphysicum, sed naturale; unde forma huius generis non dependet a materia secundum suum esse, sed potest inveniri etiam extra materiam.*" Quotation for *De spiritualibus creaturis* is taken from Aquinas, *Quaestio disputata de spiritualibus creaturis*, in *S. Thomae Aquinatis opera omnia*, ed. P.M. Leonina XIII, vol. 24, no. 2 (Rome, 2000).

<sup>72</sup> It is, in part, for this reason that we are told in Aristotle's *Categories* that substance does not admit of degrees. Aristotle, *Categories* 5.2b22–38. Commenting on Aristotle's observation from the *Categories* regarding substance, Thomas focuses on its metaphysical significance, noting that it should not be taken to mean that one species of substance cannot be more perfect than another. Rather, it means that one and the same *individual* does not participate in its species to a greater or lesser degree at one time rather than another. Furthermore, it also means that among individuals of the same species of substance, one cannot participate in that species more than another. See *Summa theologiae* I.93.3, ad. 3; cf., *ibid.* I-II.52.1 co.

<sup>73</sup> I would briefly cite the category *quality*, which includes both material qualities such as colors and immaterial ones such as moral and intellectual virtues; the category *quantity* which includes number as it pertains both to material and immaterial substance; and the category *action*, which includes both transient and immanent operations. This last example is debatable since some would argue that for Thomas,

### Conclusion

In light of the distinctions we have considered in Thomas's writings between the logician's and the metaphysician's treatment of the categories, I will conclude by returning to the question of priority. If Thomas is correct that both the logician and the metaphysician have the same list of categories, it is not by chance. But which treatment is prior? The logical or the metaphysical? To answer this question, we need to draw some further distinctions regarding different senses of priority. For in one sense, we can speak of a temporal priority—in this case what is learned first. Here, we could say that following the pedagogical order of discovery, the logical account of the categories is prior to the metaphysical, since in Thomas's view logic is learned before metaphysics.

According to a second sense of priority, we can speak of what is prior according to the order of the sciences. Following this sense, we can say that for Thomas the metaphysical account of the categories is prior to the logical; for as I have argued following his philosophical thought, metaphysics gives the categories to logic in the way that a higher science gives the lower its principles. Finally, according to a third sense of priority, we can speak of what is prior according to the order of being (*esse*) or reality. Here again, the metaphysical account is prior to the logical; for in Thomas's view, real being is prior in *esse* to intentional being. And it is such being that the metaphysician studies—the sort that, first and foremost, is divided by the categories.

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immanent operations should be properly be classed as qualities. See, e.g., Yves R. Simon, "An Essay on the Classification of Action and the Understanding of Act," *Revue de l'Université d'Ottawa* (1971): 518–41.